



Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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Oak Hairstreak

Satyrium favonius

State Status: **Special Concern**

Federal Status: None

Description: The Oak Hairstreak has dark brown wings above, often with a round, rust-colored patch in the middle of the forewing and small spot of the same color at the outer angle of the hind wing. On the underside, the wings are tan with a white and black postmedial line crossing both wings and forming a “W” near the inner margin of the hind wing; the hind wing has orange submarginal spots and an iridescent blue patch flanked by two black spots at the costal margin. Wingspan is 26-32 mm. The larva is of the typical slug-like lycaenid form, covered with short, dense setae, green with a faint lateral line and oblique dorsolateral dashes.

Habitat: In Massachusetts, the Oak Hairstreak inhabits xeric and open oak woodland and barrens on rocky uplands and sandplains. Adults butterflies are often found nectaring in weedy or scrub areas within or near such habitat, including old fields, clearings, powerline or pipeline cuts, abandoned gravel pits, etc. New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*), dogbane (*Apocynum*), and milkweed (*Asclepias*) are favored nectar sources, although others are used.

Life History: Adult butterflies fly in late June and early July. Eggs are laid on oaks (*Quercus*); the particular oak species used in Massachusetts have not been documented. Eggs overwinter and hatch in the spring; larvae feed on catkins and new foliage, pupating by early June.

Range: The Oak Hairstreak is spottily distributed from southern New England south to Florida and west to Illinois, Colorado, and Arizona. This species occurs in southeast and south-central Massachusetts, and in western Massachusetts in the Connecticut River Valley and the southern Berkshires.



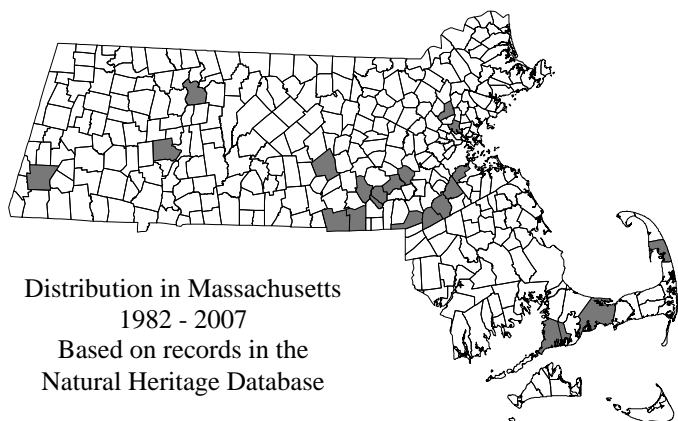
Photo by M.W. Nelson

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Threats

- Habitat loss
- Fire suppression
- Introduced generalist parasitoids
- Insecticide spraying
- Clearcut timber harvest



Distribution in Massachusetts

1982 - 2007

Based on records in the
Natural Heritage Database

Updated June 2007
M.W. Nelson